

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated April 27, 2007, claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, and 16-20 were presented for examination. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, and 16-20 were rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

The following remarks are provided in support of the pending claims and responsive to the Office Action of April 27, 2007 for the pending application.

I. Examiner's Interview of May 31, 2007

In response to the Examiner's Interview Summary dated May 31, 2007, Applicant's Attorney hereby submits a summary of the interview.

On May 31, 2007, Applicants' Attorney, Examiner Scuderi, and a third Primary Examiner met for an in-person interview at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. There was no exhibit or demonstration of the invention provided. The claims discussed during the interview included outstanding claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, and 16-20. The prior art references, U.S. Patent No. 6,604,153 to *Imamura et al.* and U.S. Patent No. 6,845,395 to *Blumenau*, were discussed as they apply to the sole prior art rejection of the outstanding claims.

This interview took place following issuance of a Non-Final Office Action and prior to submission of a response thereto. Prior to the interview, Applicant's Attorney provided Examiner Scuderi with a proposed amendment to the claims to further define the invention over the prior art of record. It was discussed how the spirit of the proposal should overcome the prior art of record, but that a formal response would necessitate a search update by the Examiner.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action of April 27, 2007, the Examiner assigned to the application rejected claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, and 16-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Imamura et al.* ('153) in view of *Blumenau et al.* ('395).

Applicants' remarks pertaining to both *Blumenau et al.* '395 and *Imamura et al.* '153 in prior communications are hereby incorporated by reference.

Neither *Imamura et al.* nor *Blumenau* teach a hardware identifier in the form of a node identifier or a cluster identifier, wherein the hardware identifier is compared with a corresponding field of a shared storage label. *Imamura et al.* teaches comparing a disk identifier with a memory identifier - such as comparing a memory medium with a storage medium.¹ However, the disk identifier of *Imamura et al.* is not a node.² As for *Blumenau*, it does not teach reading a storage media level and using data from this label as a comparison term.³ Neither *Imamura et al.* nor *Blumenau* teach the limitations of a shared storage media label having a node identifier field and/or a cluster identifier field, and comparison of a node identifier or a cluster identifier of a hardware element with the associated field of the storage media label.

As noted by the Examiner in the Office Action dated April 27, 2007, the limitations of claims 4, 5, 11, and 12 contain language that does not specifically require the limitations therein. During the course of the Examiner Interview of May 31, 2007, it was agreed that the prior art references do not teach a node identifier field or a cluster identifier field in the manner taught by Applicants. Applicants have amended claims 1, 5, 8, 12, 14, 17, 18, and 20 to more positively recite these limitations. More specifically, claims 1, 8, 14, and 18 have been amended to include the limitation of a node identifier field in the storage media label and a comparison of the node identifier of a requesting node with the node identifier field in the storage label. Claims 5 and 12 have been amended to more specifically recite the limitation pertaining to the cluster identifier and comparison of the cluster identifier of the hardware element with a cluster identifier field of the shared storage media. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner remove the prior art rejection of claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, and 16-20, and grant allowance thereof.

¹See *Imamura et al.*, Col. 6, lines 8-11.

²See Office Action dated August 25, 2006, page 7, section III, first paragraph.

³See *Blumenau*, Col. 9, lines 17-22.

III. Conclusion

Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. No new subject matter has been added to the application with the amendment to the claims presented herewith. Furthermore, Applicants are not conceding in this application that the claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner indicate allowability of claims 1, 5-8, 12-14, 17-18, and 20, and that the application pass to issue. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of the application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

For the reasons outlined above, withdrawal of the rejection of record and an allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 13, 2007